

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01  
CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 FEAE-00 FPC-01 H-01  
INR-07 INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04  
USIA-06 OES-06 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 ACDA-07  
AGRE-00 CEQ-01 CG-00 DLOS-09 DOTE-00 EPA-01  
FMC-01 IO-13 JUSE-00 NSF-01 PA-01 PRS-01 /137 W  
-----111705Z 025392 /45

R 111604Z APR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6380  
INFO RUFHRDQAMEMBASSY ALGIERS 3478  
USINT BAGHDAD  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY RABAT  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI  
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TUNIS 2498

CINCUSNAVEUR PASS POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, PLOS, WT, LY, TS  
SUBJ: FOREIGN MINISTER CHATTY'S CONSULTATIONS: LIBYA-TUNISIAN  
BOUNDARY DISPUTE; ALGERIA TO ITALY PIPELINE

REF: TUNIS 2293 (NOTAL, ALGERIA 904 (NOTAL),  
CFR NO. 14, (APRIL 6-ITEM 3)

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1. (BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL); TUNISIAN FOREIGN MINISTER CHATTY'S  
CURRENT MISSION TO ALGIERS AND RABAT (ON BEHALF OF PRESIDENT  
BOURGUIBA) IS PRIMARILY PART OF CONTINUING EFFORT TO MOBILIZE  
ARAB LEAGUE OPINION IN SUPPORT OF TUNISIAN CLAIMS IN CONTINEN-  
TAL SHELF BOUNDARY DISPUTE HEATED UP BY ITALIAN (ENI-SAIPEM)  
OIL DRILLING ON BEHALF OF LIBYANS--AND ASSORTED NAVAL VESSELS--  
IN DISPUTED AREA OF GULF OF GABES. CHATTY'S EFFORTS MADE WITH

VIEW TO SEVERAL EVENTUALITIES INCLUDING POSSIBLE REFERRAL OF ISSUE TO SECURITY COUNCIL, AS WELL AS NOW STALLED JOINT SUBMISSION OF BOUNDARY DISPUTE TO HAGE TRIBUNAL. FOLLOWING RETURN TO TUNIS FOR MEETING WITH UNDERSECRETARY HABIB, APRIL 12, CHATTY WILL CONTINUE PEREGRINATIONS WITH VISITS TO DAMASCUS, KUWAIT AND OTHER GULF CAPITALS. IN LATE MARCH, HE STARTED CONSULTATIONS WITH VISITS TO TRIPOLI, CAIRO, RIYADH, AND BAGHDAD--RETURNING VIA ROME. LOCAL PRESS CARRIES STRONG FLAVOR OF CHATTY'S PURPOSES,--AND RISING TIDE OF STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT ON THE LIBYAN DISPUTE. HOWEVER, THERE HAS BEEN NO PUBLIC MENTION SO FAR OF POSSIBLE RESORT TO SECURITY COUNCIL. (END CONFIDENTIAL).

(BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED) 2. TUNIS NEWSPAPERS APRIL 7 GAVE STRONG PLAY TO DEPARTURE STATEMENT BY CHATTY THAT HIS MISSION TO ALGIERS AND RABAT WAS "IN CONTEXT OF CONSULTATION WHICH TUNISIA HAS DECIDED TO UNDERTAKE WITH BROTHER COUNTRIES TO EXPLAIN THE NOT-REASSURING SITUATION NOW PREVAILING IN THE MAGHREB. APRIL 7, "LE TAMP" ALSO CARRIED STORY HEADLINED "CONTINENTAL SHELF-ALGERIA-MEDIATION?", CITING COROCCAN DAILY "LE MATIN DU SAHARA" AS SPECULATING THAT CURRENT CHATTY VISITS ARE TO SOLICIT SUPPORT OF KING HASSAN AND PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE IN DIPUTE WITH LIBYANS. MOROCCAN PAPER, WITH GENERALLY ACCURATE BACKGROUND TO DISPUTE, REPORTEDLY CONCLUDED THAT "ONLY ENERGETIC MILITARY INTERVENTION OF TUNISIANS" HAD PERSUADED ITALIANS TO STOP DRILLING IN FACE OF TREATENED LIBYAN SANCTIONS. SUGGESTED GOT SEEKING GOOD OFFICES OF CERTAIN ARAB STATES, BUT APPARENTLY NOT SANGUINE ON SUCCESS OF SAUDI AND IRAQI APPROACHES TO LIBYANS. LA PRESSE OF APRIL 8 CITES AFP STORY, BASED ON "IN-

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FORMED SOURCES" IN ALGIERS, THAT CHATTY MADE PRESENTATION TO BOUMEDIENE ON TUNISIAN-LIBYAN BOUNDARY DISPUTE. LE TEMPS OF APRIL 10 REPORTS CHATTY AS SAYING APRIL 9, FOLLOWING HIS AUDIENCE WITH HASSAN, THAT THEY HAD DISCUSSED "SITUATION IN NEIGHBORHOOD OF TUNISIA".

3. TUNIS DAILIES OF APRIL 10 AND APRIL 6 HAVE GIVEN STRONG PLAY TO MILITANT DECLARATIONS OF MINISTERS MOHAMED SAYAH (DIRECTOR OF DESTROURIAN SOCIALIST PARTY) AND TAHAR BELKHODJA (INTERIOR) THAT TUNISIA, WHILE PEACE-LOING, WILL NOT YIELD TO LIBYA IN BOUNDARY DISPUTE. SAYAH IS QUOTED IN LE TEMPS AS TELLING PARTY GROUP APRIL 8 IN JEBENIANA THAT DISPUTE IS MATTER OF SOVEREIGNTY ON WHICH TUNISIAN PEOPLE "CANNOT TOLERATE EITHER ABANDONMENT OR BARGAINING". SAYAH SAID PARTY AND GOVERNMENT ARE DETERMINED TO RESOLVE PROBLEM ON BASIS OF PRESERVATION AND CONSOLIDATION OF NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY AS SUPPORTED BY INTERNATIONAL LAW--"WE ABHOR WAR AND QUARRELS WHICH RISK DIVERTING US FROM OUR BASIC TASKS...OUR POSITION IS CLEAR: WE ARE PEACEFUL WITH PARTNERS,...BUT AT NO PRICE WOULD

WE CEDE A SINGLE INCH OF OUR RIGHTS. TUNISIA IS TRONG IN ITS  
RIGHT AND FROM THE UNITY AND ENTHUSIASM OF ITS PEOPLE...WE HOPE  
THE LIBYAN BROTHERS FINALLY COMPREHEND THIS. HEGEMONY AND BRU-  
TAL FORCE HAVE NEVER HAD THE FORCE OF LAW."

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TUNIS 2498

CINCUSNAVEUR PASS POLAD

4. REPORTED REMARKS OF TAHAR BELKHODJA APRIL 5 AT GHARDIMAOU  
IN SIMILAR VEIN. STRESSING TUNISIA'S PEACEFUL AND NEIGHBORLY  
POLICY, INTERIOR MINISTER CITED CONTINENTAL SHELF DISPUTE AS THE  
ONE CLEAR REGIONAL PROBLEM. REVIEWING CHRONOLOGY OF UNSUCCESS-  
FUL NEGOTIATIONS, "TUNISIAN EFFORTS TO GO WITH OUR PARTNER BE-  
FORE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE, LIBYAN INITIATIVE TO START  
PROSPECTING WHICH FURTHER COMPLICATED SITUATION, ANOTHER TUNI-  
SIAN ATTEMPT TO RENEW NEGOTIATIONS, AND FINALLY CONTACTS WITH  
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BROTHER COUNTRIES AND FRIENDS," BELKHODJA EMPHASIZED THAT "QUESTION OF CONTINENTAL SHELF IS VITAL FOR TUNISIA. WE WISH TO CONTINUE DIALOGUE AND NEGOTIATION, BUT IN CERTAIN KNOWLEDGE THAT TUNISIA WILL NOT RENOUNCE ITS RIGHTS."

5. "WE WILL AVOID TO THE LAST MEASURE DANGEROUS COMPLICATIONS," BELKHODJA SAID. "WE HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO DESIRE TO RETURN TO THE DEADLY CIRCLE OF VIOLENCE AND THE VICIOUS CIRCLE OF COMPLICATIONS IN THE MAGHREB...ONCE CAUGHT UP IN SUCH AN IMPASSE, ONE NEVER KNOWS NOW AND WHEN IT WILL TURN OUT. WE HAVE ALWAYS SAID TO OUR NEIGHBORS THAT THEY HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR FROM TUNISIA AND THAT WE WILL ALWAYS BE DISPOSED TO RESOLVE THESE PROBLEMS BY PACIFIC MEANS. THEY ALSO KNOW VERY WELL THAT THIS IS THE MEANING OF BOURGUIBAISM: NEVER ANGER, ALWAYS REASON, BUT AT THE SAME TIME A FIERCE DETERMINATION NEVER TO ABANDON ONE'S RIGHTS."

6. RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS, BELKHODJA CONTRASTED TUNISIAN RELATIONS WITH ALGERIA TO THOSE WITH LIBYA. HE DID NOT ONLY ARE THERE NO PROBLEMS WITH ALGERIA, TO CONTRARY, THE TWO GOVERNMENTS "REMAIN IN TOUCH AND HOPE TO CARRY OUT THE GAS PIPELINE PROJECT OF EVIDENT INTEREST TO BOTH."

7. LE TEMPS AND PARTY DAILY L'ACTION APRIL 7 HAD ALSO HEADLINED TUNISIAN WIRE SERVICE STORY THAT CERTAIN ITALIAN POLITICAL CIRCLES WERE CALLING FOR--AND EXPECTING--REOPENING OF NEGOTIATIONS ON ALGERIA TO ITALY NATURAL GAS PIPELINE TRANSITING TUNISIA. SOCIALIST DEPUTY CAPRICIA CITED AS DECLARING APRIL 6 THAT ENI RESPONSIBLE FOR FAILURE TO REACH OPERATIVE AGREEMENT. COMMENT: WE AGREE WITH ALGIERS 904 THAT PIPELINE DOUBTLESS WAS ANOTHER MAJOR AGENDA ITEM FOR BOUMEDIENE-CHATTY TALKS OF APRIL 7.  
MULCAHY

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## Message Attributes

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